

P.O. Box 1156
Gualala, CA 95445
April 9, 2008

Mr. Ken Wiseman
Executive Director
MLPA Initiative
C/O California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Marine Life Protection Act Initiative; North Central Coast Sub-Region 1

Dear Mr. Wiseman,

As a resident and owner at The Sea Ranch (TSR) I have followed with interest NCCRSG's development over the past year of various MPA proposals. With this letter I wish to convey to you my opposition to Proposal 2-XA (Revised 3/27/08) in relation to TSR coast. My opposition has three aspects:

- Public Access. Proposal 2-XA restricts public use of the ocean at three of the existing TSR public access trails, Stengel Beach, Pebble Beach, and Black Point Beach. As far back as 1968 Sonoma County residents became concerned that The Sea Ranch development would prohibit access to the ocean – and this concern eventually contributed to the passage of the Coastal Zone Conservation Act of 1972. Ultimately, after years of legal and legislative battles, in 1981 the California Coastal Conservancy paid The Sea Ranch Association (TSRA) \$500,000 for a bluff trail (at the north end) and five ocean access trail easements- Walk-on-Beach and Shell Beach in addition to the three noted above. And I'm sure that those who fought for public access at TSR would be dismayed that this access might not now include access to the ocean and its resources. My assessment is an attempt now to restrict access, as Proposal 2-XA outlines, likely will lead to a re-opening of old legal and legislative battles as it seems neither proponents nor opponents of TSR public access were placated completely by the 1981 agreement.
- Run-off. In commenting on an earlier MLPA design, TSRA (8/15/07) opposed expansion of the existing Del Mar Point Ecological Study Area because of a previous discussion with State Water Resources Control Board over street water discharges into the Del Mar Point Area – an issue to my knowledge that is still not resolved. While the south end of TSR appears to be free of direct street water discharges, the homes at the south end, however, are on septic systems – unlike the north end which is serviced by sewer. While TSRA has in place a well respected septic system inspection program, nevertheless it seems imprudent to me to locate a preserve adjacent to an area serviced by septic systems. These do fail, and furthermore, due to the complex TSR bluff geology, I suspect the percolation of septic systems adjacent to the bluff is not well understood. Therefore, why place a preserve next to this TSR area?

- Del Mar Point. Failure of Proposal 2-XA to include the existing Del Mar Point Ecological Study Area is perplexing. For over 35 years abalone, which are the major attraction for "consumptive users" here, have been protected in this Del Mar Point Area. And while I acknowledge that the existing Del Mar Point Area, with a length of 0.7 mi, does not meet the *scientific advisory team determined guidelines for size of 3-6 mi of coastline*, this is only a **guideline**. The Del Mar Point Ecological Area is the possibly the one area- really a heritage area - between the Russian and Gualala Rivers that has not in recent years been fished to some degree by abalone divers. The continued preservation of this area should, at a minimum, provide a useful data reference against which comparisons on abalone populations can be made in the reserves proposed along this region of the California coast.

Of the two other Proposals, 1-3 and 4, I prefer Proposal 1-3 as it retains the existing TSR public access points, avoids TSR area serviced by septic systems, and keeps the Del Mar Point as a SMP. The changes in access in Proposals 2-XA and 4 do not, in my opinion, offer significantly greater protections than Proposal 1-3 for the ocean resources along this TSR section of the coast, and will likely lead to confusion (especially 2-XA) on the part of the public as to which TSR access points allow fishing and abalone diving.

Sincerely,



Jack Walton

April 15, 2008

Chair Susan Golding and
Members of the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force
c/o California Resources Agency
1416 9th Street #1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for MPA Proposal 1-3 and 4

Dear Chair Golding and Members of the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force:

I am writing to urge you to adopt either Proposal 1-3 or Proposal 4 as the recommended, preferred alternative. I am a volunteer docent and naturalist and small boat recreational fisherman. I was fortunate to be an alternate NCCRSG member and felt all of the work teams aimed to meet the science guidelines. However, Proposal 2XA primarily strives to just meet the minimum size for very high protection State Marine Reserves¹ and does not adequately preserve important representative areas of the state's marine habitat in certain subregions.

I also support the recommendations of the California Department of Parks and Recreation which proposes modifications to Saunders Reef and Black-Salt areas which can be applied to both proposals 1-3 and 4, and to San Gregorio in Proposal 4.

Proposal 4 is clearly the best in terms of meeting the science guidelines and emphasizes striving to design high protection clusters in the preferred size range. The worst case cost impacts are not out of line with the other proposals and the SAT modeling efforts suggest that when effort is reallocated, the likely actual cost differences are minimal (1-3%). In fact in cases of extreme error either through too much fishing or environmental catastrophe, the strongest MPA network which in this case is Proposal 4 has the greatest economic benefit as well as conservation benefits. Proposal 4 is the best insurance policy available, and best meets the goals of the MLPA Act. Proposal 4 also reflects extensive discussion and compromise to meet the needs of fishing and community interests.

Proposal 1-3 is the product of cross-interest negotiation. It has deep roots in the earlier collaborative proposals in work groups 1 and 3, and builds on the best ideas available for meeting the science guidelines. Most of the shapes were selected in earlier cross-interest proposals and refined in a cross-interest team for the final round. You will hear complaints as is true with any compromise. People on both sides of the aisle would prefer to see changes. But every MPA shape selected in 1-3 had votes from both sides. Many were nearly unanimous including the Fitzgerald cluster, after halibut was added to the SMCA.

¹ The SAT's minimum size for a State Marine Reserve (SMR) to count in the network is 9 square miles. Each proposal has a network of SMRs that meets SAT guidelines at this very high protection level; Proposal 4 has six SMRs over 9 sq. mi. and Proposal 1-3 and 2XA have five each. Four of five of these SMRs in 2XA are 9.6 square miles or less, only one of five in Proposal 1-3 is less than 9.6 square miles and only one of six in Proposal 4 is less than 9.6 square miles.

We heard a clear message from your task force that cross-interest support was important, and I hope that you will respect that. If you reject Proposal 1-3 it seems to send a message that cross-interest collaboration is unimportant which diminishes the result for this region and will undermine efforts to collaborate in the future.

It would be a mistake to use proposal 1-3 as a starting point for further blending with proposal 2XA, a possibility that I have heard some suggest. Proposal 1-3 is already a compromise. If you use it as a platform for moving forward, a better approach would be a principled incorporation of a concept or two from each other proposal and careful consideration of agency suggestions, with a commitment not to lower the protection level.

Proposal 1-3 has four very high protection State Marine Reserves that meet the science guideline to extend from the intertidal zone to deep waters offshore: North of Salt Point, Bodega Head, Fitzgerald and North Farallon Islands. 2XA has only three. Although 2XA is the same at North Farallon as 1-3, 2XA misses important habitat at the other sites.

Black Point to Salt Point

Proposal 1-3 is a compromise, and 2XA is minimalist as seen in the square miles in very high protection State Marine Reserve:

Proposal 2XA	Proposal 1-3	Proposal 4
9.6	20.5	28.5

Proposal 1-3 honors the dual mission of state parks to preserve natural resources and provide recreational opportunities. The proposed reserve area at Horseshoe Cove will provide a wilderness experience for all visitors and an excellent non-consumptive diving opportunity in waters that clear rapidly compared to other north coast sites. Plenty of the state park area remains open for consumptive users south of the reserve in Proposal 1-3. The California Department of Parks and Recreation has written in support of devoting a portion of the state waters to conservation and non-consumptive users, and I support their amendments to make a small increase in this area.

Ecologically, there is important habitat in Proposal 1-3 because the 50 meter line approaches quite close to shore resulting in the fastest drop off along the coast. Proposal 1-3 extends the SMR to the state waters boundary and 2XA does not.

All proposals have reserves planned for Pt. Arena in an area close to the mouth of the Garcia River with its annual cycle of freshwater and sediment outflow. It is good to have a contrasting site south of Pt. Arena. 2XA is much closer to the outlet of the Gualala River and more influenced by its outflow than 1-3 which is farther south. Furthermore, proposal 1-3 best splits the distance between Pt Arena and the next main site at Bodega Head.

Proposal 1-3 selects a better stretch of habitat to preserve and also provides a portion of waters off Salt Point State Park for conservation.

Bodega Head

Proposal 1-3 includes important high relief habitat, and 2XA omits that habitat and is minimalist as seen in the square miles in very high protection State Marine Reserves (13.2 square miles in Proposal 1-3 vs. 9.3 square miles in 2XA)

The area north of Bodega Head has significant high relief and edge zones that support important assemblages of fish and other organisms. In addition, Proposal 1-3 includes over 2 miles of shallow sandy habitat just north of Bodega Head. This area did not count per the SAT measurements because they use the linear miles at the 20 meter iso-bath to measure soft and hard shallow substrate. Because the 20 meter iso-bath crosses the offshore reef, the 2 miles of shallow sandy habitat in Proposal 1-3 did not count for replication. But, the shallow sandy habitat protected in Proposal 1-3 is significant.

Proposal 1-3 leaves much fishing area open south of the reserve. The southern edge of the SMR was delineated by the Bodega Lab diving and boating safety officer during this round and earlier in the 1EC second round proposal.

Fitzgerald

Proposal 1-3 protects a viable section of highly complex shale reef whereas 2XA splits the existing county park and, as a result, inadequately protects the shale reef. Once again, 2XA strives for the minimum size State Marine Reserve - 9.3 square miles in 2XA and 14.3 square miles in Proposal 1-3.

The SMR design of Proposal 1-3 is a refinement of a very similar SMR proposed in an earlier cross-interest group, 1EC in the second round. This concept has been validated twice in cross-interest negotiations.

I fished for many years out of Pillar Point in a small boat. Before fisheries became so depleted I was always able to catch fish in the reefs and sandy areas south of Pillar Point. When seas are calm it is also easy to motor past the proposed SMR to fish to the north. Based on what is shown from research on existing marine reserves, we can expect that the Proposal 1-3 will replenish fish to improve fishing opportunities south of the proposed SMR.

I was a tide pool docent at Fitzgerald Marine Life Refuge as it was called then. I cannot stress enough how important it is to education interests to have a naturally functioning ecosystem off the shores of the county park. The intertidal and offshore systems are linked whether it is through crabs, rockfish or any of a myriad of other organisms.

Proposal 1-3 and 4 have additional important protections: for the kelp reef habitat at Saunders Reef, part of the shale reef at Duxbury Reef and provide for full SMR

protection at Drakes Estero after the end of the reservation of use in 2012. In summary both proposals 1-3 and 4 are strong and better than 2XA in terms of meeting the goals of the Act. Proposal 1-3 also has the advantage of being designed by a cross-interest stakeholder team. Please recommend 1-3 or 4 for adoption by the Fish and Game Commission.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rick W. Johnson
Inverness, CA

Package 1-3 and Package 4 will help protect important habitats and help ocean life recover and thrive off California's North Central Coast. Just like Yosemite over 100 years ago, we need to ensure that our children and grandchildren can experience wild, healthy oceans. These waters are the incubators of life and need our protection.

Gwyn Williams-Stanton

MPAs are one of the few proven ways to protect the ocean and our economic / recreational opportunities at the same time. i urge you to adopt MPAs widely and also spend time and resource measuring and verifying the favorable impacts.

Robert Knourek

All life on Earth, including human life, depends on the health and protection of our oceans. This is the window of time for us to act. Please support strong proposals to protect our coast and coastal waters.

Sheila Sheppard

As a long time Californian, I support Package 1-3 and Package 4. Please implement these.

Gail Bedinger

As a previous Seasonal Aide for Cal Fish and Game in the 1980's, and as a year around free diving spearfisherman since then, I feel the need to say the following: 1. Our top priority should be to protect our coasts and ecosystems; regretfully, I do not believe we do this even today. 2. Our oceans are trashed, in great part from too much pressure from commercial/party boat fishermen with no maximum catch limits on a season basis. For abalone we are allowed 24 a year, which is tight but we can manage; shouldn't everyone have yearly limits? 3. Even though some of my favourite diving areas might be closed, I support Marine Protected Areas. Right now the coastal environment needs a break from years of unregulated commercial and party boat catches, pushed in some areas right to the limit. 4. I believe these Marine Protected Areas should not necessarily be rigid closures, but instead reflect the best science/knowledge to allow low impact/sustainable recreational fishing in some areas. 5. And last, but not least, all fish should be protected during their spawning/mating season. It is very lame that fish are caught when they reproduce, especially by high yield operations. 6. And finally, what is the point of having rules when there is no law enforcement? You need to get more law enforcement personnel out there..... Please do everything in your power to protect our oceans, as they do not belong to any of us, regardless of what some of us may think!

Respectfully yours,
Alistair Lizaranzu, P.E.

California's marine lands are among the most beautiful in the world, and unique in this country since we have such a long coastline and a diverse marine population. I live in Los Angeles and have made many trips over the years to the ocean, surrounding parks and small towns for day trips and long vacations. The entire coast including the parks and towns are impacted when there is an event in it's waters, the land, water and creatures and the businesses (and therefore the towns) it supports. We must keep the ocean and it's creatures safe from any harm caused by human impact or human greed- it is ours to guard or forever destroy. Once degraded, it will never recover. I believe Package 1-3 and Package 4 should be fully supported.

Sue Iri

Dear Blue ribbon task force: I support the strongest protection plan as outlined in packages 1-3 and 4 for the Northern CA coast. We need large areas that are fully protected as no take zones if we expect fish populations to rebound from destructive and excessive fishing practices. We don't have commercial takes of land wildlife and we should not have that equivalent in the oceans- especially when so little is known about the oceans.

Liz Taylor

Doing what is right is not always immediately profitable, but we can no longer afford to overlook our fragile and unique aquatic ecosystems for short term gains. Please support package 1-3 and package 4 as I do for what is right for the future of California.

Talia Thoamsco

I am recommending the strongest possible protection for California's North Central Coast, including Package 1-3 and Package 4. In addition to the fact that it is the right thing to do for the environment, it will help the economy by providing jobs for people who work in the sport diving and kayaking industry.

Thomas Patterson

I am writing to ask and urge you to support the proposed list of Marine Protected Areas along California's North/Central Coast. It is one of the last "undiscovered" and truly unspoiled areas of California (both on land and on sea) and we owe it to ourselves, our children and the animals living there to preserve it. Please help us keep California as wild as beautiful as it is rightfully famous for. Thank you for your consideration.

Jan Charvat

I emphatically support the two strong proposals: "Package 1-3" ad "Package 4"!

Richard Glassberg

Regarding Package 1-3 and also Package 4, it is essential we defend our coastline, and the habitats under water which, while hidden from view to most citizens who enjoy a beach-front stroll, nevertheless help filter water and by extension, help clean our air. I am perfectly willing to do without many things, so long as the Earth, which the Lord God created to help us, is maintained. We have no rights to misuse and poison our environment - we are but custodians, according to the Lord, though I fear we are pretty miserable at our job.

Richard Lyons

I expect the Blue Ribbon Task Force to protect California. I support the strongest proposals for doing so: Package 1 - 3 and Package 4. I expect you to care for the future of California and Californians. Protect our natural wonders and environment.

Barb Varellas

I strongly support the two strong proposals Package 1-3 and Package 4 and think the commission should adopt one of them.

Jeff Couture

I support "Package 1-3" and "Package 4"! I'm a registered voter and a very concerned senior citizen about our marine health and environment!

Tony C. Yang

I support a strong network of Marine Protected Areas for the North Central Coast Region of the Marine Life Protection Act. Specifically, I believe that critical ecological areas such as Duxbury Reef, Saunders Reef, and the Salt Point region should be included in MPA protection. I urge your Task Force to ensure that these special places are protected in the MPA network you recommend to the Fish and Game Commission for adoption. Only two options, Package 1-3 and Package 4 protect these critical areas and I strongly support these.

Margaret Adams

I support Package 1-3 and Package 4 proposals for protecting California's ocean environs. This is a good thing. Let us move forward with this.

John Osborne

I support protecting California's oceans: Package 1-3 and package 4. Please help keep the oceans clean so that we can continue to enjoy clean water for surfing!!

Kathleen Egan

I value my coastline and the beauty that is only California. When I had personal turmoil the peace of the sea helped calm me. When I wanted to play I enjoyed swimming in the bay. When I wanted my children to understand that our world is bigger than ourselves I took them to the beach to see the red tide. Please save our natural resources so our families can enjoy and understand what beauty there is around us. It helps keep my sons active as they adventure to see the outdoors, ride in a kayak, otherwise the game boy wins. Please save our resources.

Margaret Cofresi

I would hope that you will continue to do the right things and strongly support package 1-3 and package 4. These are far better than the third option, package 2-XA, which shouldn't even be up for consideration.

Michael McGuire

My daughter will be 3 this July. All I can do as a mother is hope and wonder what the future holds for her. Our world is changing so extremely from generation to generation with much beyond our control. You have a chance to make a difference in the future of California's Coast. With less than 6% of our wild ocean spaces in pristine condition, why would we consider anything less than the largest Marine Protected Area possible?

Jessica Miller

Our coastline is one of the most beautiful in the world. There is nothing like it and I am proud to be a Californian. Please keep it beautiful! Thank you!

Lisa Dadgar

Package 1-3 and Package 4 regarding the protection of California's North Central Coast is vital to ensure the health of these coastal waters. It is known that MPAs promote biodiversity of complex marine communities, especially such productive communities as the ones along the California coast. The implementation of these MPAs will help protect coastal ecosystems that are important habitats for all sorts of amazing species.

Ryan Mayeda

Please it is important to protect the coast of California. Can you imagine what it was once like when just the California Indians lived here. They treated everything with respect and understood no one owns the sky, the land, or the ocean. Just think you can be the guardians and take care of this precious area. I am a fourth generation Californian and I can't think of another place I would want to live. Please support Pack1-3 and Package 4 to ensure the coast remains beautiful for generations to come. Thank you.

Arlene Grotz

Please protect our beautiful north central coast and its wildlife. With so much damage being done to our environment, this would be a positive step in the right direction before it's too late. We have done so much damage, I think it is our responsibility to protect what we have left.

Thank you,
Carol Caletti

Please protect our marine flora and fauna, I want future generations to be able to see the beauty I see.

Caroline Sexton

Please support this important area of our oceans. Our oceans are in trouble and we need as many protected areas as we can. I believe we need package 1-3 and package 4 and I urge you to support them also.

Tomi McDonald

The state of the oceans demand quick action to save fish stocks and other oceanic biodiversity. We might never get the chance again to safeguard these richness. {Please act decisively and support the utmost protection of Package 1-3 and Package 4. Thank you

Nuri Pierce
